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19 November 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

FROM : [REDACTED]
Director, African and Latin American Analysis

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SUBJECT : Response to Potential Contingencies Paper

The following comments constitute the Office of African and Latin American Analysis' response to the NIO paper on potential contingencies:

LATIN AMERICA

- Soviet Policy Toward a Marxist/Leninist Central America would be interesting and fun to brainstorm. It seems to us, however, that such an intricate web of assumptions would underlie the paper that it would wind up being an exercise in total speculation. At any rate, the primary action would fall to OSA, not ALA.
- Implications for Mexico of a Communist Central America by 1983. Like the above, this paper would be based on rather shaky assumptions. If Central America were Communist by 1983, that development would have grave regional implications--not just for Mexico. In our work we are continually projecting the likelihood for Communist victories in the region.
- Extreme Left Victory in El Salvador in 1982--Implications for the Region. This topic is valid. The Salvadoran situation is under constant review and continual projection (e.g., the weekly report for the Director).
- Successful Democratic Liberation of Nicaragua... This is an interesting topic and one that we are monitoring on a regular basis.
- Growth within Cuba of a "Solidarity Type" Movement... A good topic. We are working on a similar paper.
- The Potential Disruption of the Constitutional Transition of Brazil is a valid topic to consider in this type of exercise. We currently have work underway that will address aspects of that possibility.

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The paper we are doing in response to the request from you on the near term political and economic prospects in Brazil will cover this topic in the short run. The big "whither Brazil" paper that will be the culmination of the building block research being done in support of the NFAC priority issue will address the topic for the longer term.

-- A Difficult Economic Transition for Mexico is a subject we will be addressing in the coming year. In the unlikely case that needed economic adjustments are badly handled, the PRI's political control of Mexico could be jeopardized, leading to a period of instability, and perhaps to a strong swing to the political left. Political instability could in turn disrupt vital trade links with the United States and cause greatly intensified pressures for illegal migration from Mexico. We are planning a series of papers that will examine the broad range of economic policy choices open to Mexican decision-makers in the coming year and discuss the possible political and economic outcomes from worst-case to best-case scenarios.

AFRICA

-- Implications of Serious Trouble in South Africa. The central issue, for now, is the matter of external (i.e., Communist) support for black revolutionaries. The Soviets and their surrogates are well established in the states on South Africa's periphery, and their influence will grow as the level of violence grows--violence aided and abetted by the West's enemies. This is a major research theme for this Office, witness not only Priority Issue #9, (which asks the core question: will white South Africa survive?) but ALA's major research theme on Africa: "Vulnerability of Key African States to be influenced by the Soviets, Cubans, and Libyans."

At this point, we find talk about an anti-US bloc from Luanda to the Cape at least slightly ahead of reality even in the post-Iran dementia. Such a development must assume the arrival of radical black governments in both Windhoek and Pretoria--both of which could eventually occur, but not soon.

-- Zaire After Mobutu. This is a more troublesome problem. The inability of Zairian analysts to identify Mobutu's successor does not result from misguided conventional wisdom or irrational belief that Mobutu is immortal, but is the result of looking intensely at the horizon and seeing very little there. We are in fact short on collection and analysis on Zaire. But before we can get about the business of dealing with scenarios of successor regimes in Kinshasa, we need to do some basic research. We plan to offer the following list of specifics for the coming year:

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"substantially" more important source of energy to Western Europe--which presently imports nearly 5.5 million barrels per day.

The other implications of oil in West Africa reflect the NIOs' views that these West African countries will use their oil wealth to buy arms and advanced technology. He also suggests that Nigeria's role as the preeminent power in West Africa will "undergo substantial change." Nigeria and other West African oil producers--Gabon and Congo--have so far used their oil revenues to engage in unprecedented spending sprees that resulted in lots of new cars and buildings, soaring inflation, massive international debts, and little if any improvement in living standards. The governments of Cameroon and Ivory Coast--the most important of the "emerging" producers--will almost certainly come under intense popular pressure to spend the bulk of their oil money on consumer imports.

Finally, we see nothing on the horizon that would indicate a change in Nigeria's position as the premier force in West Africa. The size of the country's population--80 to 100 million--and the fact that its economy is bigger than all other black African economies combined, ensure Nigeria's status as regional leader for some time to come.

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- A paper during the first quarter of 1982 that will examine the various sources of opposition to Mobutu: outside support for these groups from the USSR, Cuba, Libya, and Angola; and their prospects for ousting the regime.
- A paper during the second or third quarter on the Zairian armed forces, which are perhaps the most likely source of a move to replace Mobutu.
- A possible long-term research paper that would examine the strength of regional forces in Zaire and try to reach some conclusions about whether and to what extent the country is likely to face anarchy and fragmentation in a post-Mobutu era.

Ultimately, we think that a broad paper on Zaire After Mobutu would be worth doing. This should perhaps be an interagency undertaking, not formally scheduled until some of the building block papers are completed.

- South African Abandonment of a Namibian Settlement. While the South Africans are unlikely to "abandon" the settlement effort, they could turn it into a charade making it difficult for the black African parties, and even the West, to continue negotiations--all of which would have major implications for the US. Hence, the idea of a speculative paper on the impact of a breakdown of the international effort to achieve a Namibian settlement is a good one. Our analysts have doubted all along that Pretoria would ever cede control over Namibia under terms that allowed SWAPO the slightest chance of dominating a post-independence government, and the Botha regime's turn to the right in the face of a conservative white backlash has only reinforced their skepticism.

Our South Africa Division has in progress a paper on the status of the Namibian insurgency that is relevant to the topic, and has tentatively scheduled two papers--one on the internal political situation in Namibia and one on the status of the settlement process--that would be building blocks for a broader paper directly addressing the suggested topic.

- Implications of Oil Discoveries in West Africa as outlined in the NIO agenda seems to us a bit far-fetched. At best, the anticipated volume of additional oil exports from West Africa--exports beyond what Nigeria and other West African producers currently have available--during this decade will be on the order of 700,000 barrels per day. Such a quantity is not likely to make West Africa a

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